

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated November 17, 2006. Claims 1, 2, 4 to 16, 25 to 39, 43 to 47, 50 and 51 are pending in the application, of which Claims 1, 7, 12, 25, 27 to 30, 32 to 34 and 41 to 43 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

As an initial matter, the Examiner did not provide an initialed copy of the Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) filed on May 19, 2006. A copy of the Form PTO-1449 which accompanied that IDS is attached hereto for the Examiner's convenience. It is respectfully requested that the Examiner initial and return the attached Form PTO-1449 to indicate that the art cited therein has been considered and made formally of record.

Claims 34 to 47, 39 to 45 and 47 to 49 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Published Appln. No. 2001/0043340 (Murata) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,862,040 (Sawachi). Claims 38 and 46 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Murata in view of Sawachi, and in further view of Canon Corporation (reference U). Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Turning to specific claim language, amended independent Claim 34 is directed to an image processing apparatus capable of detachably mounting thereon a recording medium on which image data are recorded so that an external printer can read out the recorded image data. The image processing apparatus includes read-out control means for reading-out a print setting item information file in which print setting item information indicating an item settable by the external printer is described, from the recording medium on which the print setting item information of each of a plurality of external printers is recorded by the external printer; generating means for generating print

setting information for printing, by the external printer, the image data recorded on the recording medium; analyzing means for reading-out and analyzing the print setting item information file, when the image processing apparatus sets up a print setting in advance; and selecting means for selecting a printer from among the plurality of external printers. The print setting information includes information for specifying the external printer, and the generating means generates the print setting information on the basis of the print setting item information corresponding to the printer selected by the selection means. Accordingly, the image processing apparatus of Claim 34 can generate on-line print setting information for each of a plurality of external printers.

Applicant submits that Murata and Sawachi, either alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest all of the features of Claim 34. In the Office Action, it is conceded that Murata does not disclose "the print setting item information indicative of the item settable by the external printer is recorded with respect to a plurality of external printers." Instead, the Office Action, relies on Sawachi for disclosure of that feature.

Sawachi discloses in Fig.3 a directory recorded on a setting memory card 43 which is used for setting photographing conditions of a digital still camera. However, the setting information recorded in the sub-directory is only setting information of the photographing conditions and image processing of the camera itself. That is, the memory card 43 merely records setting information to be set to processing which the camera itself executes, and therefore is not setting information indicative of items settable to process to be executed by an external apparatus as featured in Claim 34. Specifically, Sawachi discloses, in column 6 lines 42 to 44, that "(c)ombinations of data representing shooting conditions and image processing methods are recorded in the directory file areas." While

this may suggest that a plurality of kinds of setting information are recorded with respect to the camera, Sawachi is silent regarding setting information is recorded with respect to each of a plurality of external apparatuses and such information includes information specifying the external apparatus. Sawachi therefore fails to disclose or suggest reading out a print setting item information file in which print setting item information indicating an item settable by the external printer is described, from the recording medium on which the print setting item information of each of a plurality of external printers is recorded by the external printer, selecting a printer from among the plurality of external printers on the basis of the read-out information, and generating print setting information for printing an image by the external printer, on the basis of the print setting item information of the selected external printer, as recited in amended independent Claim 34.

In view of the foregoing discussion, Applicant submits that Murata and Sawachi, either alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest all of the features of the present invention as recited in amended independent Claim 34. In light of this deficiency in Murata and Sawachi, Applicant submits that amended independent Claim 34 is now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.

Amended independent Claim 42 is directed to a method substantially in accordance with the apparatus of Claim 34. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 42 is also now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.

The other pending claims in this application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed allowable for at least the same reasons. However, as each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional

aspect of the invention, individual consideration of each dependent claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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